DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 276 856 CE 045 941

AUTHOR Brown, James M.; Johnson, David R.
TITLE The Transition of Disadvantaged Youth from School to Work.
PUB DATE Dec 86
NOTE 25p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Vocational Association (Dallas, TX, December 1986).
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Compliance (Legal); *Disabilities; *Disadvantaged Youth; *Educational Improvement; Educational Needs; *Education Work Relationship; Federal Legislation; *Program Improvement; Secondary Education; Services; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS *Carl D Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1982

ABSTRACT

Programs to aid disadvantaged youth in making the transition from school to work are often lacking or underdeveloped. As a result, many disadvantaged youth become unemployed, and more than half of disabled adults are unemployed. The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act contains provisions for vocational services for special populations. This legislation's emphasis on special populations means that vocational education planners should assess local needs, gather new forms of information on student populations, and use new decision-making tools to plan and manage vocational education programs. The following improvements in current vocational programs are recommended to persons seeking to provide more effective services to disadvantaged learners: (1) the transition of disadvantaged youth and adults into vocational education programs can be improved by effective management of relevant information, effective recruitment practices, and appropriate counseling and assessment practices; (2) individualized planning should be improved and expanded, with supportive counseling to assure that student interests are genuine and that a match is made between student characteristics and program performance variables; and (3) additional transition assistance should be provided beyond the point at which students have completed their instruction within vocational programs. There will continue to be a need for local education agencies to review and revise policies and programs to assure that disadvantaged learners receive maximum benefits while participating in vocational training programs. Such improvements should also address individuals' efforts to make the transition from school to careers as meaningfully employed adults. (KC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Brown
D Johnson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED276856

THE TRANSITION OF DISADVANTAGED YOUTH FROM SCHOOL TO WORK

James M. Brown and David R. Johnson

The Carl Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act (P.L. 98-524) (hereafter referred to as The Perkins Act), represents one of the most significant federal legislative efforts to assure the provision of vocational services to America's "special populations." This new legislation emphasizes: (a) new programs; (b) program expansion, improvement, and modernization; and (c) special needs populations; suggesting, therefore, that vocational education planners should expand the scope of their existing service models (American Vocational Association, 1985).

The Perkins Act's emphasis on special populations also means that vocational education planners should assess local needs, gather new forms of information on student populations, and use new decision making tools to plan and manage vocational education programs. These efforts should be systematically undertaken to assure that the needs of special populations, such as disadvantaged youth, are addressed comprehensively in all areas of vocational education program development. For example, the development and provision of services based upon population needs is one of the key issues stressed by The Perkins Act. This legislation consistently stresses the need for vocational education personnel to break away from practices that

CE045941

only benefit students so long as they fit within and conform to traditional models of vocational education. The Perkins Act strongly encourages that funds be used for special tutors, testing and assessment, modification of current vocational curricula, environmental adaptations, career awareness programs, and full utilization of community-industry environments to enhance training experiences. The Perkins Act also emphasizes that state and local agencies should provide "equal access" for handicapped and disadvantaged students in the areas of recruitment, enrollment, program placement, and the full range of available vocational education programs.

The term transition represents a concept of high priority among most professionals concerned with the career development of youth with special needs. Since 1984, the transition of special education program completers from school to work has been the number one federal priority for the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS). Shortcomings of current transition-related practices are reflected in the following rationale for Section 626 of the Education for Handicapped Children Act Amendments (PL 98-199):

> The Subcommittee [on the Handicapped] recognized the overwhelming paucity of effective programming for these handicapped youth, which eventually accounts for unnecessarily large numbers of handicapped adults who become unemployed and therefore dependent on society. These youth historically have not been adequately prepared for the changes and demands of life

> after high school. In addition, few, if any, are able to access or use appropriate traditional transitional services. Few services have been designed to assist handicapped young people in their efforts to enter the labor force or attain their becoming self-sufficient adults, and contributing members to our society. (p. 1367).

While the federal transition initiative is not a mandate within special education or vocational education, it has not only heightened the awareness of educators and service providers but also has caused significant actions to occur. It is believed that these changes are largely due to federal funding that encourages the development of transition demonstration projects nationally. The federal government has budgeted in excess of $20 million in the past three years for training and research in this area.

The impetus for improving services to bridge the gap between educational and adult services has been demonstrated by the results of several follow-up studies that have examined post-school employment and independent living outcomes for youth with disabilities (Halpern & Benz, 1984; Hasazi, Gordon, & Roe, 1985; Mithaug, Horiuchi, & Fanning, 1985; Wehman, Kregel, & Seyfarth, 1985). These research results are supported by further evidence that 50% to 75% of working age adults who reported a disability are jobless (U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1983).

Problems in secondary education transition programming identified in the literature include: (a) a general lack of follow-up records on handicapped students (Bruininks, 1985;

Johnson, Bruininks, & Thurlow, in press; Halpern & Benz, 1984); (b) the need for extended follow-up services support and retraining, (Ford & Dineen, 1984); (c) insufficient provision of on-the-job training by vocational programs for students placed in competitive jobs (Ford & Dineen, 1984); (d) the absence of long-term vocational services to help individuals retain their jobs, (Ford & Dineen, 1984); (e) inadequate coordination and service planning between schools and agencies, (Johnson et al., in press; Edgar, Horton, & Maddox, 1984); (f) lack of systematic transition planning and insufficient provision of information about local community adult services to parents of handicapped students (McDonnell, Wilcox & Boles, 1983); and (g) ineffective interagency agreements and cooperation (Wehman, Kregel, & Barcus, 1985).

The Perkins Act specifically cites the need to provide, "counseling services designed to facilitate the transition from school to post-school employment and career opportunities" (P.L. 98-524, Section 204 (c)). The success of disadvantaged individuals' transition from vocational education to employment is primarily a function of the quality and appropriateness of the services and support received during students' vocational training programs, as well as the assistance they receive in securing employment following their training. It should also be recognized that success in completing vocational training and securing desired employment outcomes may relate directly to other factors such as family stability, economic status of individuals, peer structure, and maturity level. Data available regarding disadvantaged youths' efforts to: gain access to and complete

vocational training programs, secure employment, express satisfaction with their work situations, experience career growth, and earn equitable and sufficient wages, are not systematically collected or available. Unemployment rates, as well as program dropout rates, suggest that disadvantaged individuals may not be encountering equal access to programs and may not be receiving sufficient assistance to resolve problematic personal situations or performance difficulties during their training, and may not be achieving their training-related employment goals.

In recent years, entry into the job market, as well as being able to remain employed, has become increasingly more challenging and frustrating to disadvantaged populations. Kimeldorf and Tornow (1984) report that the number of new jobs in our society have not kept pace with the number of new entrants into the work force, especially in regard to jobs available to women and immigrants. They also note that although 61 federal programs have annually spent over $60 billion for special populations, less than 2% of those funds have typically been allocated to support employment training efforts. These training allocations continue to exist in spite of the fact that unemployment rates among young Hispanics, blacks, and other minorities continue to exceed 40% annually (Business Poll, 1983). In addition, among those youth of school age, 1.1 million annually fail to successfully complete high school with their age peers (Phelps, 1985). For example, there has been a drastic increase in the annual unemployment rate among nonwhite male teenagers, as it has jumped from 19% in 1955-

59 to 48.5% in September 1983 (U.S. Department of Labor, 1983). Society should acknowledge the tremendous economic societal losses that are occurring among this country's disadvantaged populations in terms of reduced personal and family incomes, as well as the indirect costs to federal, state, and local governments for food subsides, public assistance, unemployment compensation, and lost productivity (Just, 1985).

Effective transition services for disadvantaged youth and adults should identify and describe: (a) essential service components needed by disadvantaged individuals to gain access to and successfully complete training programs, (b) the roles of school personnel in meeting these needs, and (c) the specific characteristics of transition planning processes that are consistent with the spirit and intent of The Perkins Act and which can be reasonably implemented at the local level.

Equity and Service Implications of The Perkins Act

Section 204 (a)(1)2 of the Perkins Act states that: The State Board shall, with respect to that portion of the allotment distributed in accordance with Section 203 (a) for vocational education services and activities for handicapped individuals and disadvantaged individuals, provide assurances that -

1) Equal access will be provided to handicapped and disadvantaged individuals in recruitment, enrollment and placement activities; and

2) Equal access will be provided to handicapped and

disadvantaged individuals so the full range of vocational education programs is available to non-handicapped and non-disadvantaged individuals, including occupationally specific courses of study, cooperative education, and apprenticeship programs.

This Act's equal access provisions draw attention to the requirement for local education agencies to identify disadvantaged individuals who may qualify for services based upon under academic or economic selection criteria. It remains the responsibility of local vocational education planners to develop procedures to effectively identify youth and adults who meet the criteria for disadvantagement. Beyond the questions of identification, is the concern for educational "equity." That is, once a wide array of educational opportunities are available, how can educators ensure that students will receive appropriate treatments and services needed for them to be successful in their educational pursuits (Phelps, 1985)? The concept of access will mean little if appropriate support services and resource personnel are not available to assist disadvantaged youth and adults during their training experiences.

Section 204 (c) (1)4 of the Perkins Act states that:

Each student who enrolls in vocational education programs and to whom subsection (b) applies shall receive:

(1) assessment of the interests, abilities, and special needs of such students with respect to completing successfully the vocational education program;

(2) special services including adaptation of curriculum, instruction, equipment, and facilities

designed to meet the needs decribed in clause (1);

(3) guidance, counseling, and career development activities conducted by professionally trained counselors who are associated with the provision of such special services; and

(4) counseling services designed to facilitate the transition from school to post-school employment and career opportunities.

Of interest in interpreting these guidelines, is that The Perkins Act does not define or prescribe specific guidelines for interpreting what these services actually should entail when implemented locally. No mention of the scope, intensity, or breadth of these services is described in The Perkins Act, thus, placing this responsibility directly upon local education agencies. In fact, The Perkins Act specifically mentions "local education agencies" rather than "eligible recipients", as was the case in previous vocational education legislation. This language change means that postsecondary institutions currently receiving federal vocational education funds are exempted from the Act`s requirements (Cobb, 1985). The implications of this change are currently unknown, but are potentially far reaching and substantial.

If state and local education agencies fail to provide readily available, ambitious vocational support services, and effective programs for disadvantaged populations, dropout rates and long- and short-term costs to these individuals and society will continue to increase drastically. Vocational education

programs seem to be ideally located within our society to help prevent disadvantaged students from dropping out due to their frustrations with the general educational system's inability to meaningfully address their immediate and long-term needs (Just, 1985). The Perkins Act establishes two broad provisions for assuring disadvantaged individuals' equitable access to programs and states that appropriate support services essential to successful program completion should be provided. Significant action at the state and local level will be required, however, to implement these ambitious provisions.

When examining the implications of The Perkins Act for special populations, it is essential to view the issues of service development and equity as inseparable. The concept of successful transition from vocational education programs to the workplace means that disadvantaged individuals should receive appropriate assessment services, as well as assurances of equal treatment at the time of enrollment, during training, and during the transition to employment.

Assessing Special Service Needs

Assessment services for disadvantaged learners should focus on several new issues:

1. These services should be different than those now provided in traditional vocational evaluation laboratories/centers;
2. they should be conducted, at least partially, by persons who are most likely to benefit from the assessment results, i.e., special needs resource teachers, vocational guidance

personnel, and regular vocational educators;

3. such activities are not necessarily the sole domain of certified vocational evaluators;
4. the assessment of a specific disadvantaged individual should be assigned as the responsibility of one individual staff member, e.g., a special needs support service specialist;
5. the Perkins Act does not refer specifically to aptitude testing, instead, interest and ability tests are emphasized;
6. assessment should occur in the actual environment in which training is likely to occur;
7. assessment instrumentation should be directly related to training environments;
8. assessment personnel should begin immediate efforts to develop local performance samples derived from vocational program content, information monitoring checklists, or instructionally relevant situational assessments; and
9. assessment processes should de-emphasize economic attributes as criteria for determining eligibility for disadvantaged services, and avoid using school grades or past academic failures to achieve minimal competences as criteria for determining that students are academically disadvantaged.

Individualized Program Planning for Disadvantaged Youth and Adults

Special educators have substantially improved the quality of their efforts related to individualized student planning. Public Law 94-142 specifically requires that individualized

education plans (IEPs) must be developed for each handicapped child and the purpose of these plans is to assure that the educational needs of each child are systematically addressed within the least restrictive environment. While such formalized planning practices are not mandated for disadvantaged youth and adults, individualized planning should be contained within the array of strategies used to educate/train disadvantaged individuals. For general student populations, such efforts typically consist of individualized career counseling and program planning assistance. These services typically are provided by school vocational counselors, special resource instructors, and vocational education instructors.

Assessments of students' interests, abilities, and unique educational needs and resources should be contrasted with the specific needs and resources characteristics of vocational training programs in which students may enroll. In addition, students should be assessed both before, as well as during their training programs in order to minimize potential problems and to maximize the benefits which students derive from their training experiences.

Pre-Instructional Assessment Strategies

An effective approach to assessment has recently been developed at the Pine City, Minnesota, Area Vocational-Technical Institute (AVTI). Although special needs learners' math and reading ability levels continue to be assessed before students enter postsecondary vocational training programs at Pine City AVTI, the nature of assessment efforts at that AVTI have substantially shifted since 1984. That AVTI's assessment

practices for both disadvantaged and handicapped new students now emphasize collecting information that is drawn primarily from interviews with individual students during orientation meetings a month or two before the students enter vocational training programs. During these interviews, special needs support services staff members focus on developing insights about students in the following areas:

(a) prior educational experiences, both in high school and in any other post-high school training that may have occurred;

(b) family/marital status (current and past);

(c) reason(s) for entering specific vocational training programs;

(d) child care needs or problems;

(e) dependability of transportation to and from the AVTI;

(f) the extent and nature of their motivation to successfully complete their training program;

(g) their career goals and the appropriateness of their choice of training as a means to achieve those goals;

(h) the state of their physical health and the impact of any prescribed medications that they will be taking;

(i) the sources of financial aid that they will be receiving and how they qualified for that aid (physical, mental, emotional, financial, etc.);

(j) other issues such as unusual physical appearances or mannerisms, insights about how well they liked prior school experiences and how well they performed there, their favorite topics to study, specific problems previously encountered educational and work settings; and

(k) how well they feel about themselves and what personal factors they feel will enhance and/or inhibit their success in completing their vocational programs.

Since most of these issues are highly subjective, personal, and not easily quantified, it is important to remember that the goal of these orientation interviews is to obtain useful information about how individuals feel about themselves and their expressed comfort levels related to their entry into vocational training programs. Interviewers should continually stress each client's rights NOT to disclose information. It is also important to note that interviewers also emphasize each client's responsibility to help themselves. For example, students are encouraged to seek out help from support services staff, as opposed to encouraging students to believe that support service staff will always take the initiative and seek out the students in order to provide them with needed assistance. Pine City AVTI's approach to assessment stresses efforts to orient students to the concept that they are ultimately responsible for their own successes and/or failures. This philosophy tends to encourage an increased sense of responsibility that has often systematically exorcised from disadvantaged students during their earlier contacts with schools and society at large.

Counseling efforts at this stage of students' training programs should serve the function of assessing other aspects of students' lives which may, in the long run, present personal obstacles to program completion. These counseling services can include the gathering of information about individuals' economic

stability, family structure, social controls, and interpersonal difficulties experienced in previous educational and employment situations.

The positive relationship developed between vocational counselors and students should be cultivated throughout students' training experiences. Too often, students leave or are terminated from their training programs due to personal problems and/or poor communication with instructors and staff, even though students' performance levels may have been adequate. Once students and their vocational counselors are comfortable with placement decisions, written individualized plans should be developed. Subsequently, special needs resource personnel, vocational instructors, vocational students, and vocational counselors should also identify the special needs resource services that students may need to help them successfully complete their training programs. These planning sessions also establish the roles, responsibilities, and schedules of professionals who will coordinate services and conduct follow-up activities and interventions needed during students' training programs.

Assessment During the Instructional Phase

Brown (in press) has suggested that vocational students' sense of responsibility or attitudes may serve as the primary student attribute for systems that identify and monitor potential dropouts while they are receiving instruction within postsecondary vocational education programs. Although Brown's system was initially designed to retain potential dropouts in any special needs category, the system seems to be especially well

suited for assessing both economically and academically disadvantaged students while they are participating in vocational training programs.

This intervention and retention system for students periodically focuses on two factors: (a) each student's satisfaction with his/her training program, and (b) the institution's rating of each student's satisfactoriness, as rated by her/his instructor (Kayser & Brown (1981). When the level of either or both of these factors drops too low, it is likely that a student will drop out of school, be terminated, or perform far below their maximum level of potential.

After field-testing these instruments with a wide cross-section of postsecondary vocational students (N=148) with 11 instructors in 8 vocational training programs, Brown (1986) reported that a factor analysis of data from vocational instructors indicated that students' levels of motivation, attitudes, and maturity represent 76% of the variance accounted for by the instrument that measures students' "satisfactoriness" levels. Surprisingly, this is approximately 15 times greater than the influence of the second largest factor, students' academic skills, which accounted for only 7% of the measure of students' satisfactoriness. Clearly, disadvantaged students' levels of motivation to succeed within their vocational training programs can significantly inhibit and/or enhance their chances of completing their training programs and of pursuing meaningful, productive careers. The system which Brown (1986) has suggested for quickly identifying potential dropouts in time to make

retention efforts feasible, uses meaningful student data related to students' functional characteristics, rather than typically meaningless labels such as "academically disadvantaged." Such an approach seems to offer far more utility for reducing dropout rates and for enhancing students' chances of success within vocational training programs than traditional assessment efforts.

Training Program Selection Strategies

A variety of strategies should be used in efforts to broaden students' awareness and understanding of vocational program selection processes. Situational observations and tryouts in selected training programs before actual instruction begins, appear to be useful and desirable options. Conferences with vocational instructors may also be a useful means of insuring that students' expressed interests are valid.

Student Retention Strategies

Students who drop out of school commonly list the following reasons: (a) to go to work, (b) financial need, (c) transportation, and (d) personal needs (Batsche, 1985). However, the American College Testing Program (1978) suggested that more substantive reasons include feelings of isolation, boredom, dissonance, and irrelevancy. Batsche also cited a study by Mertens, Sirtz, and Cox (1983) that found that school dropouts experienced significantly higher unemployment rates than those who didn't drop out. In addition, female dropouts earned substantially lower hourly pay rates, while male dropouts were unemployed longer and worked fewer hours per week than non-dropouts.

Given the unfortunate fact that dropout rates among

disadvantaged students tend to be even higher than among the remaining student population, it is critical for vocational educators and support service personnel to help disadvantaged students to avoid communication problems, interpersonal conflicts, and educational performance levels that are below the levels of which those individual students are capable. The effective use assessment strategies before and/or during vocational training experiences can help avoid or minimize many of these programs. For example, information produced by dropout identification and monitoring efforts can be used as the basis for meaningful periodic conferences between vocational instructors and individual students. Such conferences could focus on issues that are inhibiting and/or enhancing students' performance within training programs. Also, these conferences can provide useful information regarding students' views of where instructors are failing to adequately address each student's unique instructional needs. Clearly, such conferences could become opportunities for students and instructors to acknowledge emerging problems and to jointly seek to find ways to avoid or overcome those problems.

Follow-up services should routinely involve examining interactions between individual student characteristics, curricula, and learning environments, to determine what curricular and/or environmental modifications, and other related services are necessary to assure successful program placements (Cobb, 1985). Periodic follow-ups also provide opportunities for special resource personnel to communicate with students regarding

students' satisfaction with their programs and to identify personal problems or difficulties they are experiencing which might interfere with progress toward program completion. These interventions should be structured and scheduled so that students can anticipate when these interventions will occur and, thus, avoid feeling they are being monitored inordinately. Students and their instructors should agree in advance that monitoring activities will be implemented as an informal, unobtrusive process. It is hoped that such efforts will be perceived more favorably once they have provided useful, structured feedback that helps students and their instructors solve and avoid potential problems.

Cobb (1985) suggests that ongoing assessment and program monitoring efforts are associated with regulatory definitions in The Perkins Act regarding handicapped and disadvantaged students. These provisions state that individuals are handicapped or disadvantaged only if they require special programs, services, or assistance to enable them to succeed in vocational education programs. Ongoing follow-up activities continue to question what special programs, services, or assistance should be provided to disadvantaged individuals in order to assure that they will successfully complete their vocational programs. These services should closely reflect the individual needs of each student.

Placement: Transitions to Employment

The primary goal of vocational programs and the criterion for measuring their success is the extent to which they successfully place trainees within related employment settings.

This transition from vocational programs to employment is often assisted only minimally by vocational program staff or placement personnel. Many schools seem to believe that they have met their obligation training students, and that success in employment afterwards is a function of students' personal capacity to demonstrate work competence. A review of the literature shows insufficient evidence of efforts to provide structured, well-planned placement assistance for disadvantaged individuals after they have completed their vocational training programs.

There are several types of transition placement assistance that should be considered. These should be viewed as general program adaptations that can readily be implemented by existing vocational program staff. For example, disadvantaged students who have received special assistance, i.e., remedial math and reading, tutoring, curriculum modifications, etc., to enable them to successfully complete their vocational programs, may also require, at least initially, assistance in adapting to new employment settings.

Simplified job analysis procedures can be used to analyze employment environments to determine specific modifications or adaptations that may be required for individuals to succeed on their jobs. For example, disadvantaged students may need assistance to identify potential problem areas related to specific deficits at new work sites and compensatory strategies may need to be developed to overcome potential performance barriers. For example, vocational placement staff can play critical roles in the analysis of employment settings and the selection of strategies to help students, as well as

employers, effectively cope with problem areas.

It also is desirable to teach students self-advocacy skills related to personal communication and conflict resolution. The ability to communicate effectively with employers and co-workers regarding personal adaptations needed to learn job duties and the day-to-day performance of these duties is essential. Resolving personal differences with employers and co-workers is equally as important to disadvantaged individuals' job success and satisfaction.

Vocational schools might also provide on-call assistance to resolve initial job training and adjustment difficulties. If students and employers could utilize external resources to advise and mediate, students' job retention could often be enhanced by providing assistance to students and employers when serious problems occur. These general strategies would require vocational education staff to strengthen the job placement function of schools by modifying the current roles of staff. The development of these types of strategies conforms to the implied intent of The Perkins Act.

Outcome Oriented Evaluation

In order to improve the overall capacity of vocational training programs to assure that disadvantaged students have equal access to the full range of vocational education opportunities, comprehensive and systematic evaluations of those programs and related services should be regularly conducted. Evaluation data about vocational education programs will provide administrators/supervisors and program designers with decision-

making information that will enable them to modify programs and improve transition-related services. Accurate data bases are needed regarding disadvantaged students who have completed their vocational training programs and entered the labor market. Documentation of the difficulties encountered by these students as they were seeking to enter and/or maintain their jobs can serve as an indication of the effectiveness of vocational education programs' services for disadvantaged learners. The Perkins Act specifically seeks to place increased emphasis on program improvement. Thus, information about the quality of disadvantaged students' vocational education experiences, current employment status, and satisfaction with their employment status can provide a sound empirical foundation for efforts to improve vocational programs that are sensitive to students' needs.

Recommendations

The following improvements in current vocational programs are recommended to persons seeking to provide more effective services to disadvantaged learners.

1. The transition of disadvantaged youth and adults into vocational education programs can be improved by effectively managing relevant information, effective recruitment practices, and appropriate counseling and assessment practices.
2. Individualized planning should be improved and expanded, with supportive counseling to assure that student interests are genuine and that a match is made between student characteristics and program performance variables.
3. Additional transition assistance should be provided beyond

the point at which students have completed their instruction within vocational programs.

There will continue to be an ongoing need for local education agencies to review and revise current institutional policies and program practices to assure that disadvantaged learners receive maximum benefits while participating in vocational training programs. Such improvements should also address individuals' efforts to make the transition from school to careers as meaningfully employed adults.

Reference List

American Vocational Association (1985). A guide to implementing the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act. Washington D.C.

Business Poll. (Fall 1983). U.S. Education system is major concern for business. New York: Research & Forecasts, Inc.

Cobb, B. (1985). Vocational assessment of the special needs learner: A special education perspective. Paper presented at the American Vocational Association Convention, Atlanta, GA, December.

Edgar, E., Horton, B., Maddox, M. (1984). Postschool placements: Planning for public school students with developmental disabilities. Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education, 6(2), 15-18, 26.

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act Amendments. (1983). Public Law 98-199.

Ford, L., & Dineen, J. (1984). Is there life after placement? Education and Training of the Mentally Retarded, 19(4), 291-296.

Halpern, A. S. & Benz, M. R. (1984). Toward excellence in secondary special education: A statewide study of Oregon's high school programs for students with mild disabilities. Eugene: University of Oregon.

Hasazi, S. B., Gordon, L. R. & Roe, C. A. (1985). Factors associated with the employment status of handicapped youth exiting high school from 1979 to 1983. Exceptional Children, 51(6), 455-469.

Johnson, D., Bruininks, R. and Thurlow, M. (in press). Meeting the challenge of transition service planning through improved interagency cooperation. Exceptional Child.

Just, D. (1985). Delinquent youth and employment. The Journal of Vocational Special Needs Education, (7)3, 11-16.

Kimeldorf, M. & Tornow, J. (1984). Job search education: Meeting the challenge of unemployment. The Journal of Vocational Special Needs Education, (1), 7-10.

McDonnell, J. J., Wilcox, B., & Boles, S. M. (1983). Issues in the transition from school to adult services: A study of parents of secondary students with severe handicaps. Eugene: University of Oregon, Center on Human Development, Specialized Training Program Model School and Community Services for People with Severe Handicaps. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 240 381).

Mithaug, D. F., Horiuchi, C. N., & Fanning, P. N. (1985). A report on the Colorado statewide follow-up survey of special education students. Exceptional Children, 51, 397-404.

Phelps, L. A. (1985). An agenda for action: Excellence in Education. Journal of Vocational Special Needs Spring, (7)3.

Plisko, V. (ed.). (1984). The condition of education: 1984 edition. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Educational Statistics.

U. S. Commision on Civil Rights. (1983). Washington, D.C.

U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (1983). Employment and earnings (Explanatory Notes), Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office.

Wehman, P., Kregel, J., & Barcus, J. M. (1985). From school to work: A vocational transition model for handicapped students. Exceptional Children, 52(1), 25-37.

Wehman, P., Kregel, J., & Seyfarth, J. (1985). Transition from school to work for individuals with severe handicaps. A follow-up study. Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 10(3), 132-136.